

Subject: RELEASE: MAYOR GARCETTI PARTICIPATES IN WALK TO SCHOOL DAY WITH LAUSD STUDENTS TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT TRAFFIC SAFETY

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MAYOR GARCETTI PARTICIPATES IN WALK TO SCHOOL DAY WITH LAUSD STUDENTS TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT TRAFFIC SAFETY

LOS ANGELES, CA (October 4, 2017)

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Mayor Eric Garcetti celebrated the city's annual Walk to School Day at Magnolia Avenue Elementary School, while locally hosted events were underway at 180 Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools. Over 48,000 LAUSD students participated in events, along with countless parents, teachers, and administrators, more than any other city in America.

National Walk to School Day celebrates the benefits of walking while raising awareness on traffic safety. Safe Routes to School (SRTS), the city's traffic safety program focused around schools, works with local communities to make a student's walk to school safer. SRTS is a core strategy of Vision Zero Los Angeles, the City's goal to eliminate traffic fatalities through commonsense safety improvements. Safe Routes plays an important role in achieving this ambitious goal, as collisions are a leading cause of death for kids in Los Angeles County.

In 2014, Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), in partnership with LAUSD, secured \$23 million to fund a mix of infrastructure improvements, school travel plans, safety education, and traffic enforcement programs at high-need schools. In 2018, LADOT will begin construction on nine new school traffic safety projects.

"Every child deserves to grow up in a neighborhood with safe streets and easy access to a quality education," said Mayor Garcetti. "Walking to school helps our kids get the exercise they need, build self-confidence, and draw closer to their families, friends, and neighbors. We're taking action to make sure that those routes to school are as safe as

possible for Angelenos of all ages.”

“Los Angeles leads the nation in safety improvements around schools,” said LADOT GM Seleta Reynolds. “These commonsense improvements make a child’s walk to school much less stressful, ensuring that her school day is focused on what matters: building a bright future.”

Mayor Garcetti, Mónica García, President of the LAUSD Board of Education, and several dignitaries, gave remarks at Magnolia Avenue Elementary, where over 30 people in a mile radius have been killed in the last 5 years. In the past year, LADOT has installed 11 speed feedback signs, 67 upgraded crosswalks, and 28 tightened intersections, which shorten a pedestrian’s crossing distance, in close proximity to Magnolia Elementary.

“Getting every student to school safely is everyone’s business. L.A. Unified is a proud partner for student success from preschool to the graduation finish line — and this includes Safe Routes to School,” said LAUSD School Board President Mónica García. “We thank families, staff, partners, and community leadership that strengthen safe passages so that every child in Los Angeles has the opportunity to read, write, think, and believe.”

Echoing this, Magnolia Elementary School 4th-grader Albert Fuentes said, “I like skateboarding to school because it gives me energy and exercise.”

Walk to School Day was established in the United States in 1997 by the Partnership for a Walkable America. In 2000, Canada and Great Britain joined with the U.S. to create International Walk to School Day. The National Center for Safe Routes to School, the coordinating agency for Walk and Bike to School Day, registered over 4,500 schools nationwide in Walk to School Day. This year, Los Angeles led the country in the most schools registered and received an award from the National Center for Safe Routes to School for its leadership on Vision Zero for youth.

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